

Implementing the Hazardous Waste Electronic Manifest Establishment Act (e-Manifest Act) Progress Report – November 2014

On November 20, 2014, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) conducted a webinar, open to all interested stakeholders, to discuss the steps taken thus far and next steps in the development of a national electronic manifest (e-Manifest) system, which will upgrade the current paper-based system of tracking hazardous waste to an electronic one.

The e-Manifest program is a fundamental component of the E-Enterprise agency-wide initiative to develop new tools to reduce the reporting burden on regulated entities, and provide the agency, states and the public with broader access to environmental data. EPA estimates the national e-Manifest system will ultimately reduce the burden associated with preparing shipping manifests by between 300,000 and 700,000 hours, and result in cost savings of more than \$75 million per year for states and industry. Consistent with the agency's E-Enterprise principles, the e-Manifest system will significantly improve access to higher quality and more timely waste shipment data, and will empower communities by providing transparent, accurate, information on completed waste shipments and waste management trends.

When a facility generates hazardous waste, the waste is often transported to another facility to be stored, treated, or disposed. Currently, the EPA requires industry to track and keep records of type, volume, sources and destinations of hazardous waste shipments through a set of paper forms (manifests), reports, and procedures that follow the shipments from generation facility to disposal facility (cradle-to-grave). This process produces millions of manifests each year. EPA is working with states, industry, the U.S. Department of Transportation, and other stakeholders to modernize this process.

In January 2014, the EPA received the initial appropriated funding to develop the e-Manifest program. With this funding, the agency has been moving forward aggressively on key activities necessary to implement the e-Manifest Act. In February 2014, the EPA published the e-Manifest One-Year rule which establishes the basic legal and policy framework for the future use of electronic manifests for tracking hazardous waste shipments. Immediately after that the EPA started a second rulemaking to establish the user fee structure. This rule will ultimately address user fees for paper manifest processing and electronic manifests. The goal is to have the final regulation issued no later than 90 days prior to the system online-deployment date.

The agency is also making progress in establishing the Hazardous Waste Electronic Manifest System Advisory Board (the Board), and is on target to meet the statutory deadline of October 5, 2015. The Board must include two members with expertise in information technology, three members with hazardous waste industry/user experience, and three members who are state representatives responsible for manifest processing. The Board will meet at least annually to provide recommendations to the EPA Administrator relating to implementation of the e-Manifest program and is an integral part of EPA's broader stakeholder outreach efforts, including webinars and meetings with industry users and states.

Since April 2014, the EPA has been working closely with states, industry and other stakeholders to develop system architecture plans for many key aspects of the system. Architecture planning is essential for successful design and development. The e-Manifest team conducted a series of 15

technical webinars with state and industry stakeholders. Meetings have been focused on issues such as:

- State and industry expectations and requirements for interacting with e-Manifest.
- State and industry data access needs and reports available from the e-Manifest system.
- Electronic signature requirements for electronic manifests.
- Manifest quality assurance and correction processes.

This system architecture planning will inform the Request for Proposal(s) (RFP) to procure appropriate vendor(s)/services so that EPA may move forward into the system development phase to support building the full national system. EPA will be able to announce a target date for completion of the system after a vendor has been selected and the work plan is agreed upon.

The EPA will use an agile system development approach, and will be doing both prototyping as well as extensive user testing to ensure stakeholder validation and buy-in of the e-Manifest system prior to deployment. It is anticipated that the revamped e-Manifest program will ultimately be used by approximately 160,000 people generating approximately 4 to 5 million manifests each year. The EPA will continue to work closely with states, industry and other stakeholders, obtaining their input on the project every step of the way.

For more information: <http://www.epa.gov/osw/hazard/transportation/manifest/e-man.htm>